

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 SS-15 SIG-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02  
SP-02 USIA-15 DHA-02 EB-07 IO-13 /093 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/P:FJSEIDNER/EUR/CE:JWARD:ST  
APPROVED BY D:WCHRISTOPHER  
EUR - MR. VINE  
EUR - MR. ARMITAGE  
S/PRS - MR. CARTER

-----260335Z 046217 /14

R 252157Z MAY 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, GE, GW, XH

SUBJECT:GDR MOVES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.:  
-- PRESS GUIDANCE

FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE ON PRESS REPORTS ON GDR MOVES  
TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH U.S. AS PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT  
SPOKESMAN. YOU MAY DRAW ON IT AS APPROPRIATE IN  
ANSWERING PRESS QUERIES.

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Q: HOW ACCURATE IS THE REPORT IN THE WASHINGTON POST THAT  
THE GDR HAS MADE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS  
WITH THE U.S. AND WHAT IS THE U.S. REACTIONS TO THESE  
PROPOSALS?

A: THE REPORT IS ESSENTIALLY CORRECT. THE GDR HAS  
RECENTLY PROPOSED A NUMBER OF STEPS FOR EXPANDING RELATIONS

AND WE ARE STUDYING THESE CAREFULLY. MOST OF THESE PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN MADE BEFORE AND THE GDR HAS INCLUDED THESE IN THEIR LATEST NOTE. WE WILL BE DISCUSSING THESE PROPOSALS WITH THE GDR ON A SYSTEMATIC BASIS.

Q: HOW IMPORTANT IS THE GDR DECISION TO SETTLE FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES IN TERMS OF IMPROVED RELATIONS?

A: WE ARE GRATIFIED THAT THE GDR HAS PROMISED TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES. WE REGARD THIS AS A MAJOR STEP BY THE GDR TOWARD ACCOMMODATING U.S. CONCERN ABOUT THIS ISSUE. THIS IS ONE OF THREE AREAS ON WHICH WE TOLD THE GDR WE WISHED TO MAKE PROGRESS WHEN WE ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN 1974. WE WILL WANT TO SEE, OF COURSE, WHETHER THE GDR WILL CONTINUE THIS POLICY IN THE FUTURE. WE ALSO HOPE THAT THE GDR WILL ADOPT A MORE RELAXED ATTITUDE ON TEMPORARY VISITS TO THE U.S. BY PERSONS WISHING TO VISIT CLOSE RELATIVES HERE.

Q: WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THE GDR PROPOSAL FOR HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS?

A: WE ARE STUDYING THIS PROPOSAL AND WILL RESPOND TO IT IN TIME. GENERALLY WE BELIEVE THAT PROGRESS SHOULD BE MADE IN VARIOUS PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF OUR RELATIONS BEFORE SUCH DISCUSSIONS.

Q: DON'T THE GDR PROPOSALS CALL FOR PROGRESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS? WHAT DOES THE U.S. WANT?  
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A: AT THE ONSET OF RELATIONS WITH THE GDR, WE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THREE OF OUR PRINCIPAL INTERESTS WERE SETTling HUMANITARIAN CASES, REACHING AGREEMENT ON A CONSULAR CONVENTION, AND SETTling CLAIMS. THE GDR, IT APPEARS, IS MOVING TO SATISFY US IN REGARD TO THE FIRST POINT. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOT SO FAR BEEN ABLE TO CONCLUDE A SATISFACTORY CONSULAR CONVENTION NOR HAVE WE REACHED ANY AGREEMENT ON CLAIMS. WE WOULD WANT TO HAVE PROGRESS IN THESE AREAS BEFORE GOING AHEAD ACROSS THE BOARD WITH THE GDR.

Q: WHAT ABOUT MOST FAVORED NATION TREATMENT FOR THE GDR?

A: AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE GDR WOULD NOT MEET THE CRITERIA REQUIRED FOR MFN STATUS UNDER THE JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT TO THE TRADE ACT BECAUSE OF THE GDR'S OVERALL EMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS.

Q: IS THERE A PROBLEM REGARDING JOURNALISTS' WORKING CONDITIONS AND VISAS?

A: WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY PROBLEMS ON EITHER SIDE IN REGARD TO WORKING CONDITIONS. ON VISAS, THE GDR REFUSES TO ACCREDIT U.S. JOURNALISTS WHO ARE ALSO ACCREDITED IN BERLIN AND WEST GERMANY, A POLICY WE DO NOT BELIEVE IS JUSTIFIED. WE HAVE, THEREFORE, NOT ISSUED MULTIPLE ENTRY

VISAS TO THE SEVERAL GDR JOURNALISTS WHO ARE RESIDENT IN THE U.S.

Q: NOW THAT THE GDR IS MOVING TO SETTLE ALL ITS PENDING HUMANITARIAN CASES WITH THE UNITED STATES, WHAT IS THE RECORD FOR OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES? SPECIFICALLY, WHAT IS THE RECORD ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES? ON MARRIAGE CASES? ON TEMPORARY VISAS?  
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A: THE RECORD IS MIXED.

YUGOSLAVIA HAS THE BEST RECORD. VIRTUALLY ALL YUGOSLAVS CAN LEAVE THE COUNTRY LEGALLY AND RETURN AT WILL, AND THERE ARE NO CASES OF FAMILY MEMBERS BEING UNABLE TO LEAVE YUGOSLAVIA TO JOIN RELATIVES IN THE UNITED STATES. HUNGARY HAS ALSO APPLIED A GENERALLY POSITIVE SPIRIT TO ITS EMIGRATION PROCEDURES AND THE NUMBER OF OUTSTANDING FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES IS SMALL. THE NUMBER OF OUTSTANDING DIVIDED FAMILY CASES WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS ALSO RELATIVELY SMALL.

THE BULGARIAN RECORD HAS ALSO IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY. IN THE SPRING OF 1976, WE RECEIVED HIGH-LEVEL ASSURANCES FROM THE BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT THAT OUR PENDING DIVIDED FAMILY CASES WOULD BE RESOLVED AND, INDEED, A NUMBER OF LONG-STALLED CASES HAVE RECENTLY BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.

THE RECORD IN OTHER COUNTRIES IS SOMEWHAT LESS FAVORABLE DUE TO THE LARGE POLISH-AMERICAN POPULATION, THERE IS A CORRESPONDINGLY LARGE NUMBER OF DIVIDED FAMILY CASES IN POLAND. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, THE POLISH GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN FAVORABLE ACTION ON A NUMBER OF URGENT HUMANITARIAN CASES.

IN THE CASE OF ROMANIA, THE NUMBER OF PENDING DIVIDED FAMILY CASES HAS REMAINED AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME LEVEL IN RECENT MONTHS AND EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES HAS DROPPED SOMEWHAT FROM THE LEVEL OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

IN THE CASE OF THE SOVIET UNION, THERE HAS BEEN A SUB-  
STANTIAL INCREASE IN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES IN  
RECENT YEARS (LAST YEAR THE NUMBER OF SOVIET EXIT VISAS  
FOR THE U.S. WAS 2,574, TEN TIMES THE NUMBER SIX YEARS AGO,  
AND DOUBLE THE TOTAL OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR). PROGRESS IN  
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RESOLUTION OF LONG-STANDING DIVIDED FAMILY CASES, HOWEVER,  
CONTINUES TO BE SLOW, WITH ABOUT 1;0 CASES INVOLVING SOME  
300 INDIVIDUALS REQUIRING RESOLUTION. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** GDR MOVES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.: -- PRESS GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE ON PRESS REPORTS ON GD  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009